

and military caseworker, Joanna Rowe, who is retiring at the end of the year. Joanna has been with me since the beginning of my service here in the House in the beginning of 2005. Since day one, anyone who encountered Joanna instantly knew her passion for our veterans.

We had veterans line up just to go sit down and talk to Joanna and have a conversation with her because of her warm spirit and what a wonderful person she is, and everyone understood that very quickly.

The numbers tell that story about her passion for our veterans. During her service, Joanna has handled just shy of 6,000 veterans' cases and 362 Active-Duty military cases. She has helped 106 veterans obtain medals they were due for their service. She played an important role in helping establish the VA community-based outpatient clinics in Hickory and in Forest City, North Carolina, and was a key resource to county veterans service officers in 17 different counties during her service.

Susan Hall, the veterans service officer in Rutherford County, said of Joanna: "Joanna's commitment to serving the veterans of our community is exemplary. I will miss her greatly. The Congressman, as well as the people of Rutherford County and the great State of North Carolina have been blessed with the service of Joanna Rowe."

Joanna will be missed and will be missed by so many, not just the veterans, but her coworkers who love her dearly. And not just her coworkers, but me. Being able to work with her and to call her a friend and to learn from her has meant a great deal to me and to my wife Julia, as well as my kids.

So we want to thank her for her service. I thank her for her loving spirit and the strength of her faith.

It seems like just yesterday that she and I and her husband, Freddy, sat down for lunch in the fall of 2003 to talk about politics. I learned a lot during that first election to Congress from Joanna, and I thank her for her service and thank her for her friendship.

Joanna, we know you won't be a stranger. Thanks so much. We love you.

#### CELEBRATING MINNESOTA WINS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. OMAR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, I want to start out by thanking my community for reelecting me to serve Minnesota's Fifth Congressional District.

Our State continues to have the highest voter turnout in the Nation. It is one of the easiest States to vote in and should be a model for States across the country.

In my district, we increased our voter share by 10 percentage points from 2020, and we got more votes than any other House candidate in Minnesota.

Beyond that, Minnesotans voted to flip the Minnesota Senate, creating a

Democratic trifecta for the first time in nearly a decade.

We also voted for incredible new leaders throughout our State that have many firsts behind their names.

Bobby Joe Champion will be the first Black president of the Minnesota Senate.

Zaynab Mohamed will be the first African-born Somali woman and Gen Z member to be elected to the Minnesota Senate.

Along with Zaynab, Clare Oumou Verbeten and Erin Maye Quade will be among the first Black women elected to the Minnesota Senate.

Samantha Sencer-Mura will be the first Japanese-American member of the Minnesota House.

Leigh Finke will be the first trans member of the Minnesota House.

Mary Moriarty will be the first openly gay woman elected to be the Hennepin County attorney.

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Representation matters. We know none of these candidates ran to be the "first." They ran to make a difference for their communities.

When I was first elected to the Minnesota House, I was the first and only Somali-American legislator. Now there will be 11 Somali-American legislators across the country. It is often said, you can't be what you can't see. I am incredibly proud that we, along with so many others, have been able to inspire countless people to run for office. So now many more people will finally see themselves reflected in various places and positions of power.

I also want to take a moment to honor two of my mentors, Representative Jim Davnie and Senator Patricia Torres Ray, who are retiring from the Minnesota State House and Senate. I thank them for representing our communities so well over the years. I can't wait to see the work they continue to do to make sure our State thrives.

As we get ready to welcome in new leaders throughout our State, this is our time to deliver meaningful changes for Minnesotans. Now is the time to deliver affordable childcare, lower healthcare costs, invest in K-12 and higher education, combat the climate crisis, and legalize marijuana.

Minnesota nice is leading with compassion and getting things done. Let's get to work.

#### INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY ON MYANMAR

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about the situation in Burma.

It has been my honor this year to be a member of the International Parliamentary Inquiry on Myanmar. Our group of lawmakers representing Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America released our final report earlier this month, which I will submit as an extension of my remarks.

The tragedy of the Burmese military coup is immense, but the resilience of the Burmese people and their move-

ment for democracy is deeply inspiring. The United States must recognize the National Unity Government as the legitimate government of Burma and never give legitimacy to the coup leaders.

But we should also be clear that the National Unity Government must include Rohingya representation to be legitimate. The international community has not done nearly enough to support the democratic aspirations of the Burmese people. We must lead by example while we still have time.

#### OUR BODIES, OUR CHOICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, when the Supreme Court voted to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, I was totally outraged. We knew that that day was coming, and as horrific as it was and is, we were ready. But I was not alone in that outrage.

Madam Speaker, over the past few weeks, the American people took their outrage, and they turned it into action. From Kentucky to California, red States to blue, our constituents made their voices heard, and their message is clear.

Americans trust people, not politicians, to make their own decisions about their health and their lives, including about abortion. Americans will use their vote to strike down attacks on reproductive rights time and time again and, yes, support reproductive freedom. Madam Speaker, it is time to turn our constituents' demands into congressional action.

To my Republican colleagues who try to claim their extremism as public opinion, we saw that the majority of American people are not buying it. I am determined to ensure that their voices are heard, to fight for all of our rights to make our own decisions over our bodies. I won't stop, and none of my colleagues here will stop, until the right to abortion is available and to keep politicians from interfering in our personal decisions about our bodies. We are going to keep fighting that this is available to everyone regardless of race, ZIP Code, or income. It is our bodies, and it is our choices.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE FUELING WILDFIRES

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the House amendment to S. 3902, the FIRE Act. I am proud to support this bill and thank my good friends and fellow Californians, Senator PADILLA and Congresswoman LOFGREN, for their leadership, and Chairman DEFAZIO and the Speaker for bringing it to the floor.

Communities across the world are feeling the impact of climate change, fueling wildfires and harming fragile ecosystems and communities.

I was privileged to be in Egypt last week for COP27, and it was very apparent and clear, and the voices were heard that we have got to address these